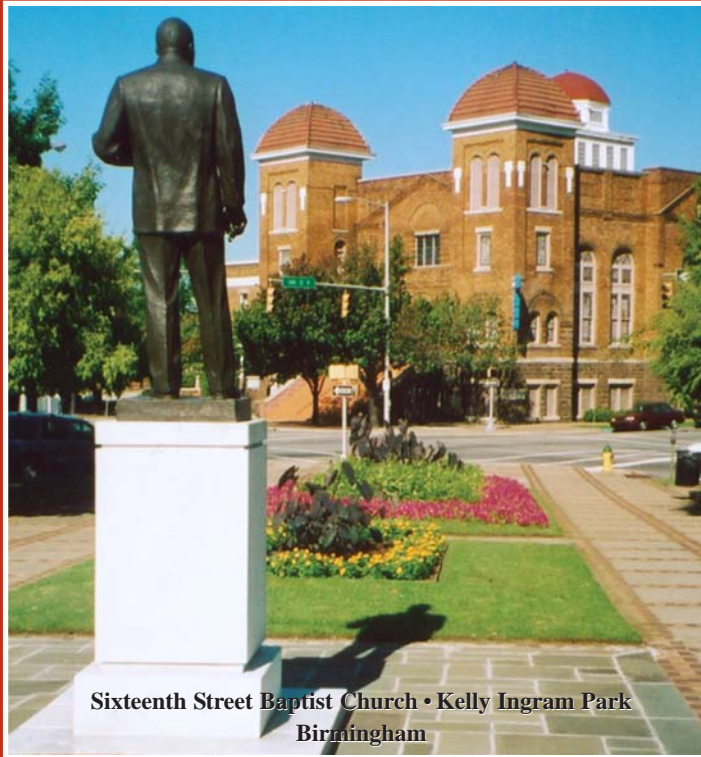
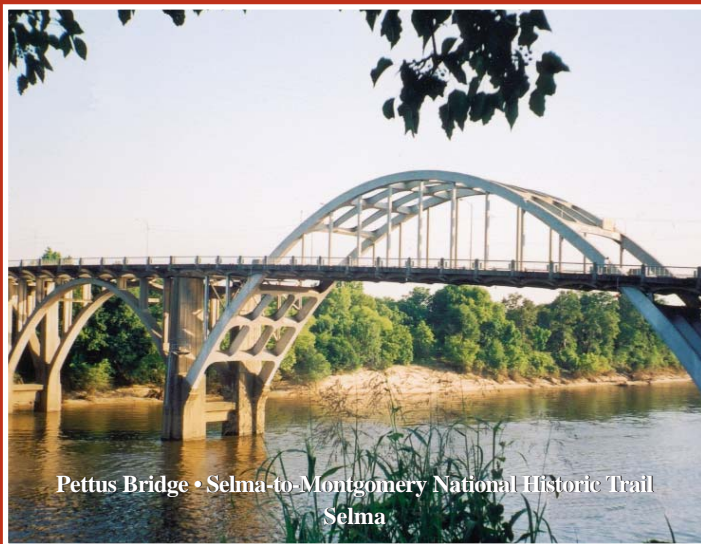


# ALABAMA CIVIL RIGHTS MUSEUM TRAIL



Sixteenth Street Baptist Church • Kelly Ingram Park  
Birmingham



Pettus Bridge • Selma-to-Montgomery National Historic Trail  
Selma

# ALABAMA CIVIL RIGHTS MUSEUM TRAIL



Dexter Avenue King Memorial Baptist Church  
Montgomery

# Walk through history on Alabama's Civil Rights Museum Trail

Names like Selma, Martin Luther King Jr. and Rosa Parks are enshrined in American history books along with those of Valley Forge, Yorktown and Thomas Jefferson.

Unlike the revolution that formed the American nation, the **Civil Rights Movement** two centuries later sought equality for all United States citizens and inspired oppressed minorities as far away as South Africa and Poland to demand equal rights.

“In the South, particularly Alabama, the places and paths of the Civil Rights Movement are now becoming destinations for travelers.”

– *The New York Times*

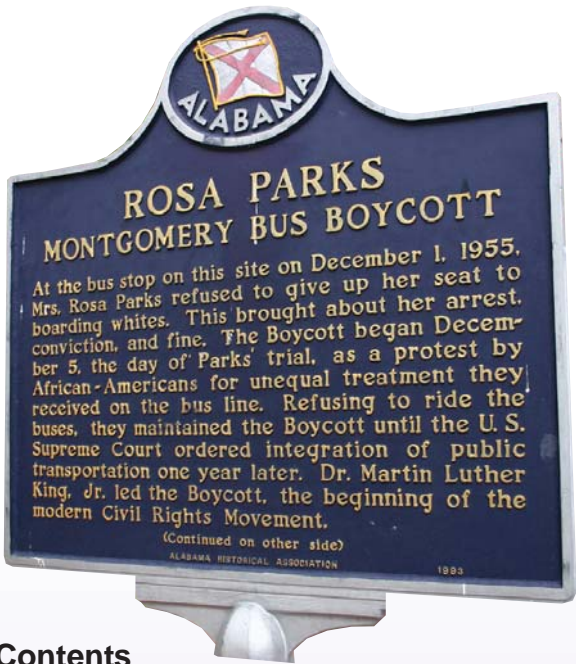
You are invited to visit many of the places in Alabama that were battlegrounds from 1955 to 1965. Learn of those whose sacrifices and bravery changed the world. While exploring Alabama's trail, you may encounter people who were active in the Movement. Today, they gladly share their unique perspectives of this American achievement.

The museums featured here are the best places to learn about the role of Alabamians. You can discover other churches, colleges, groups and individuals who were involved by inquiring at local visitor centers throughout the state.

**Birmingham** is about 90 minutes north of the other towns shown here. **Selma** and **Tuskegee** are less than an hour west and east of **Montgomery**, the state capital. **Start at any town. Leave informed.**



*Sixteenth Street Baptist Church*



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## A Legacy of Change

During the Reconstruction period after the Civil War, amendments to the U.S. Constitution allowed freed slaves the right to vote and own property, leading to the election of Negroes to local offices and even Congress. By the end of the 19th century, however, Southern states passed laws limiting those freedoms and segregating Negroes from whites.

The conviction of nine Negro boys on rape charges involving two white girls aboard a freight train in north Alabama became an international sensation in the 1930s. The **U.S. Supreme Court** overturned the conviction of the **Scottsboro Boys** because Negroes had been excluded from the jury. It was one of the court's first civil-rights decisions.

During World War II, Negro pilots who trained at **Tuskegee's Moton Field** achieved hero status for their skill and bravery over European skies. Although President Truman integrated the military, the **Tuskegee Airmen** returned to a segregated America as second-class citizens.

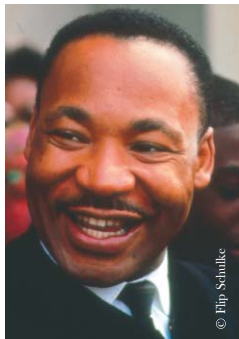


Alabama Power

Tuskegee Airmen

A decade later, congregations in Negro churches – virtually the only institution not controlled by

whites – conducted peaceful protests to overturn laws allowing segregation. In 1955, seamstress **Rosa Parks** was arrested after boarding a **Montgomery** bus at **Court Square** and refusing to give up her seat to a white man.



Martin Luther King Jr.

A new Montgomery minister, **Martin Luther King Jr.**, was recruited to organize a boycott of city

buses. This began the modern **Civil Rights Movement**. A year later, the **Montgomery Bus Boycott** ended with a U.S. Supreme Court decision that mandated equal access to public transportation.

In **Birmingham**, Negroes were frustrated at not being allowed to vote, drink from the same water fountains as whites, or eat in white-owned cafes. After a series of protests in 1963 where the city's police had violent clashes with marchers, racists bombed the **Sixteenth Street Baptist Church** and killed four black girls.



Segregated fountain exhibit, Birmingham Civil Rights Institute

Two years later, Negroes in **Selma**, who were also prevented from registering to vote, tried to march to the State Capitol to present their grievances. As the group left downtown, police attacked them at the **Edmund Pettus Bridge**. Undeterred, they completed their journey. Worldwide attention for the successful **Selma-to-Montgomery March** motivated President Lyndon Johnson to push the stalled **Voting Rights Bill** through Congress.



As African-Americans gained the ability to vote and impact local ordinances, they swept their old foes from office and gained control of some local governments. **Gov. George Wallace** received their support in 1982 and he appointed many blacks to public offices and boards. African-Americans, 27 percent of the state's population, now occupy many positions of leadership in state government.



Edmund Pettus Bridge

Many of the movement's **foot soldiers** today volunteer as guides at Alabama's museums devoted to civil rights. They bear witness how the struggles of the past have improved their lives and those of their families in present-day Alabama.



© ABTT

# Montgomery

*A young tourist poses with Eric Blome's sculpture of Rosa Parks at the Rosa Parks Library and Museum.*

The city that had been known as the “Cradle of the Confederacy” has the dual distinction of being the “Birthplace of Civil Rights.”

Shortly after marrying his college sweetheart in Marion, Ala., 24-year-old **Martin Luther King Jr.** preached his first sermon at **Dexter Avenue Baptist Church**, a block from the **Alabama State Capitol** where Southern secessionists had formed the Confederacy in 1861.

The next year in 1955, 42-year-old seamstress **Rosa Parks** was arrested for refusing to relinquish her seat on a city bus to whites as required by city ordinance. Negro ministers and lawyers, who had been waiting for a test case on the constitutionality of the law, recruited the reluctant young minister to lead a boycott of city buses.

King's stirring oratory galvanized the black community and made him the spokesman for the fledgling movement. Some 50,000 Negroes refused to ride the city's buses for 381 days until the

U.S. Supreme Court struck down laws segregating public transportation.

The **Montgomery Bus Boycott** was the first major victory in the modern Civil Rights Movement. Dr. King became the acknowledged leader of the movement. His increased responsibilities prompted him to resign from church duties after four years. Meanwhile, Mrs. Parks and her husband moved north to establish an educational program for young people.

After “**Freedom Rider**” college students were attacked in Montgomery in 1964, for the first time federal authorities provided protection for civil rights demonstrators. King's non-violent leadership was recognized with the 1964 Nobel Peace Prize.

Voting rights advocates in Selma decided to take action by presenting their grievances



*Rosa Parks on city bus*





*Alabama State Capitol at the east end of Dexter Avenue*

to the governor, walking 54 miles along U.S. 80 to the State Capitol in Montgomery. After police halted the first attempt, the federal courts became involved and provided protection to marchers so that they could go forward and finish their landmark journey.

As the **Selma-to-Montgomery Voting Rights March** streamed into downtown Montgomery three days later en route to the Capitol, marchers passed the bus stop where Mrs. Parks had been arrested a decade earlier.

Some 25,000 marchers and out-of-state supporters, including Mrs. Parks, filled Dexter Avenue. The throng stretched from King's former church to the steps of the Capitol. "Segregation is on its death bed," King told the crowd.



Montgomery changed dramatically in the 50 years following Rosa Parks' arrest:



*Bus exhibit, Rosa Parks Museum*

- The **Rosa Parks Library and Museum** opened on the 45th anniversary of her arrest.

- Visitors to the city can now ride a replica of the 1953-era bus on which Mrs. Parks was arrested.

- The modest frame parsonage Dr. King and his young family called home for four years has been authentically restored and opened to the public as the **Dexter Parsonage Museum**.

- Dr. King's church, renamed the **Dexter Avenue King Memorial Baptist Church**, is now a National Historic Landmark visited by tourists from around the world.

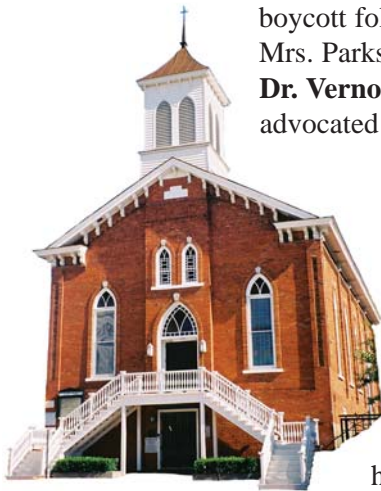
- A block behind the church is the **Civil Rights Memorial** designed by renowned sculptor Maya Lin, whose other best-known work is the Vietnam Memorial in Washington, D.C.



## Dexter Avenue King Memorial Baptist Church

The church is a National Historic Landmark because of its status as the birthplace of the Civil Rights Movement. It is the only church where Martin Luther King Jr. served as senior pastor.

Enter through the ground-level doors to the basement where **Rev. David Abernathy**, NAACP activist **E.D. Nixon**, King and others vowed a bus boycott following the arrest of Mrs. Parks. King's predecessor, **Dr. Vernon Johns**, had long advocated such action.



A large mural depicts the struggles of the movement and landmark moments in King's life. Climb the stairs to see the simple, peaceful sanctuary where his sermons promised hope and brotherhood, and defined the movement.

Construction on the church began in 1833. The church is on the site of a pre-Civil War pen that held slaves before they were sold at auction.

**454 Dexter Avenue** a block west of the State Capitol. 334-263-3970. Admission. Tours: Mon.-Fri., walk-through Sat. Check hours in advance. Groups schedule at least a week ahead of visit. [www.dexterkingmemorial.org](http://www.dexterkingmemorial.org)

*Sanctuary at Dexter Avenue King Memorial*



*Dexter Parsonage*

## Dexter Parsonage Museum

Rev. Martin and **Mrs. Coretta Scott King** lived in the Dexter church parsonage a few blocks southeast of the church from Sept. 1, 1954, until late 1959 when they moved to Atlanta. Mrs. King and their baby, Yolanda, were home when a bomb damaged the front porch one night during the boycott. The minister quickly arrived and quelled angry neighbors demanding revenge.

The Interpretive Center next door offers a short video presentation prior to tours of the parsonage.

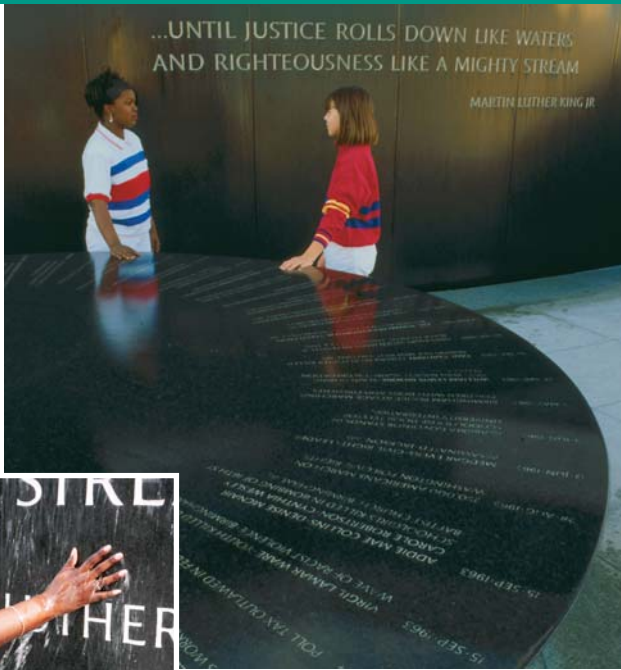


*Parsonage kitchen*

The house is furnished with period furniture, some dating from the residency of the Kings. A photo of Gandhi in the study recalls the famed pacifist whose teachings were an inspiration to King.

**303 S. Jackson Street** south of Monroe Avenue. 334-261-3270. Admission (discount with Dexter Avenue King Memorial ticket). Tours by appointment. [www.dakmf.org](http://www.dakmf.org)





Civil Rights Memorial



## The Civil Rights Memorial Center

The Civil Rights Memorial designed by international artist Maya Lin is a block south of the church where Martin Luther King was pastor. It honors 40 individuals who died between 1954 and 1968 and encourages visitors to reflect on the struggle for equality.

After you read the names of the martyrs and a timeline of landmark events etched on its black granite table, walk up the entrance at mid-block to enter the new Civil Rights Memorial Center and learn the stories of the martyrs.

The “Here I Stand” exhibits chronicle important events that occurred downtown during the Civil Rights Movement. A short film in the 60-seat auditorium provides an overview of the movement. Visitors can sign a pledge to work for justice at the Wall of Tolerance.

**400 Washington Avenue** at South Hull Street.  
Admission. 334-956-8200.

## Rosa Parks Museum

Multi-media presentations, period photography and several dioramas bring to life the story of Rosa Parks and the Montgomery Bus Boycott. A vintage municipal bus – used in the movie *The Long Walk Home* – is used to reenact the arrest of the respected Negro community leader. Visitors can have their photographs made while seated next to a life-size bronze sculpture of the “Mother of the Civil Rights Movement.”

A restored 1953 bus operates in downtown Montgomery in conjunction with the 50th anniversary of the boycott.



Rosa Parks Museum

**252 Montgomery Street.** 334-241-8615.

Admission. Mon.-Sat. [www.tsum.edu/museum](http://www.tsum.edu/museum)

## Additional Sites

**Holt Street Baptist Church** was the site of mass meetings leading to the bus boycott. 903 South Holt Street. 334-263-0522. By appointment.

**The National Center for the Study of Civil Rights & African-American Culture** highlights the involvement of the local community and Alabama State University students during the boycott and the Civil Rights Movement. 1345 Carter Hill Road. 334-229-4824.

*A restored 1953-era bus carries passengers to downtown destinations.*





*Sixteenth Street Baptist Church*

# Birmingham

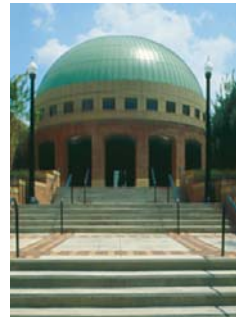
During the first half of the 20th century, blacks could not use the same public accommodations as whites, vote, or try on clothes in white-owned shops. Those who complained were often harassed or beaten by gangs linked to the police.

Dr. King and community leaders, including **Rev. Fred Shuttlesworth**, targeted the city's segregation laws in 1963. Police disrupted demonstrations with dogs and fire hoses. White-owned stores suffered economically and city leaders agreed to end discrimination.

Within days of King's "I Have a Dream" speech at the March on Washington, racists bombed a black church active in the movement, killing four little girls. The bombing prompted many reluctant

whites to oppose the brutality directed against Negroes. Many years later, three white men were convicted of the bombing.

Because many whites moved to Birmingham's affluent suburbs, African-Americans have dominated local government for the past several decades and elected Richard Arrington, the city's first black mayor. As a way to heal past divisions over race, Arrington encouraged turning former battlefields into shrines that are now visited by tourists from around the world.



*Civil Rights Institute*





*Processional Gallery at the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute*

## The Birmingham Civil Rights Institute

One of the South's finest museums is part history lesson, part audience participation and part demonstration of how the city has evolved since the 1960s. Photos, videos, audio recordings and exhibits put visitors inside the integration movement.

Look for the cell where King wrote the famous **"Letter from the Birmingham Jail"** that urged religious bystanders to become active in the movement. Visitors can see "white" and "colored" drinking fountains and a 1950s lunch counter that symbolized segregation in public places. A Greyhound bus that was torched near Anniston, because black and white riders challenged the state's segregation laws, is also displayed. A statue of Rev. Fred Shuttlesworth honors the leader of Birmingham's 1963 demonstrations.

**520 16th Street** adjacent to Sixteenth Street Baptist Church and Kelly Ingram Park. Admission charged except Sun. Closed Mon. 205-328-9696.  
www.bcri.org

## Sixteenth Street Baptist Church

The church suffered the deadliest moment in the history of the civil rights era. Days after a six-year court battle ended in favor of integrating Birmingham schools, and climaxing four months of demonstrations by blacks, Klansmen retaliated. On Sept. 15, 1963, they bombed the church, killing four girls in the basement who were preparing for Sunday School.

Photos on display in the basement show the damage of the dynamite blast. In the sanctuary, look near the pulpit for school pictures of the four girls. Look up in the balcony for a stained-glass depiction of a black crucified Christ and the words "You do it unto me." It was a gift from the people of Wales after the tragedy. The congregation of about 300 members holds an annual memorial service on the anniversary of the bombing.

Spike Lee's 1997 film *Four Little Girls* was nominated for an Oscar for best documentary.

**1530 Sixth Avenue North.** 205-251-9402.  
Admission. Tues.-Sat. Groups by appointment only.

## Kelly Ingram Park

Blacks gathered in a public park in the spring of 1963 to march to City Hall to oppose racial discrimination. Walk through the now peaceful



*Audio park tour*

park to see artists' images from the era. The **Freedom Walk** sculptures include two children seen through jail bars, a trio of praying ministers, and an image of a dog menacing a man.

Alabama's largest statue of **Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.** faces the Sixteenth Street Church. The park was named in

1932 for a local white fireman who was the first American sailor killed in World War I.

Rent an audio wand at the Civil Rights Institute that guides visitors through the park. You can hear veterans of the marches tell stories of the demonstrations in their own words.

The film, *Mighty Times: The Children's March*, won the 2005 Academy Award for documentary short subject. It was produced by the Southern Poverty Law Center in Montgomery.

**Bordered by 16th and 17th Streets and Fifth and Sixth Avenues.** Free.

*Trio of ministers at Kelly Ingram Park*



*"I Ain't Afraid of Your Jail" sculpture, Kelly Ingram Park*

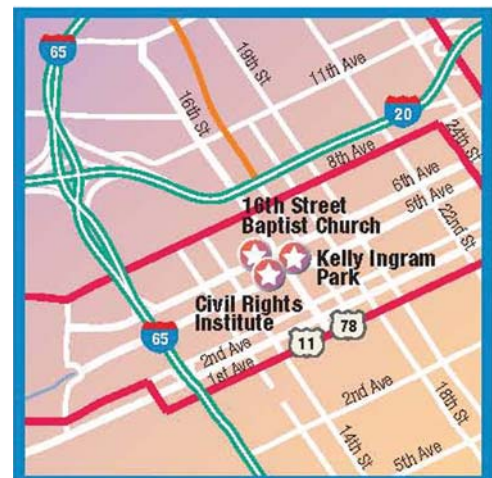
## Additional Sites

**Bethel Baptist Church**, pastored by Rev. Fred Shuttlesworth, survived three bombings while serving as the headquarters for the Alabama Christian Movement for Human Rights and the 1963 Birmingham Civil Rights Movement. 3233 29th Avenue North. 205-322-5360. By appointment.



*Shuttlesworth statue*

**Chris McNair Studio & Art Gallery** showcases a memorial exhibit on 11-year-old Denise McNair, killed in the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church bombing. 45 Sixth Avenue South. 205-322-2685.







*Edmund Pettus Bridge over the Alabama River*

# Selma

Activists held a series of marches in 1965 to protest the failure of white politicians to allow Negroes to vote. During a march 30 miles away in Marion on Feb. 18, police shot 26-year-old **Jimmie Lee Jackson** who was protecting his mother and grandfather from assault. His death inspired voting rights advocates to march to Montgomery and present their demands to Gov. George Wallace.

On March 7, **Rev. Hosea Williams** and **John Lewis** stepped from the pulpit of **Brown Chapel Church** and led a group of 600 toward Montgomery. After just six blocks, when they crossed the **Edmund Pettus Bridge** over the Alabama River, Sheriff Jimmy Clark's mounted deputies and state troopers dispatched by Wallace attacked the group with nightsticks and tear gas, injuring dozens. Television networks interrupted regular programming to show film of what became known as "Bloody Sunday." The scene stunned national political leaders.

Two weeks later, religious leaders joined **Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.** to support the local marchers. Under the watchful protection of National Guardsmen and Army troops, a court-ordered limit of 300 marchers walked along U.S. Hwy. 80 during the day and slept in the fields at night. They covered the 54 miles between Selma and Montgomery in four days and gathered without incident in front of the State Capitol.

**Viola Liuzzo**, a 39-year-old white mother of five from Detroit, was shot while shuttling marchers back to Selma. Her death outraged moder-



ates, and **President Lyndon Johnson** was emboldened to push through Congress the stalled **Voting Rights Bill**.



*Brown Chapel AME Church*

## Selma-to-Montgomery National Historic Trail

Tourists can visit a number of locations along the route (primarily U.S. 80), indicated by blue signs erected by the National Park Service. It has been designated both a National Scenic Byway and All-American Road. Some of the more prominent sites to see:



- The National Historic Trail begins at **Brown Chapel AME Church** and ends some 54 miles to the east at the **State Capitol** in Montgomery. A bust of Dr. King is in front of the church. From the Edmund Pettus Bridge, turn east onto Water Avenue and then left on Martin Luther King Street. Go four blocks to the church. Open by appointment. 334-874-7897.

- The southern approach of the **Edmund Pettus Bridge** is where “a sea of blue” law enforcement officers attacked marchers with tear gas and nightsticks.

- The **Voting Rights Trail Interpretive Center** operated by the National Park Service and the State of Alabama at the midpoint of the trail displays photographs and memorabilia from the march. It is between mile markers 105 and 106 in the rural community of White Hall in Lowndes County.

- The night before the final march to the Capitol, the **City of St. Jude**, a Catholic complex on Fairview Avenue in Montgomery, offered its 36 acres to the marchers. They slept on the athletic field and held a “Stars of Freedom Rally” featuring such celebrities as Harry Belafonte, Pete Seeger, Leonard Bernstein and Joan Baez. An interpretive center will focus on the speeches and the global impact of the march.

## Edmund Pettus Bridge

Visitors can walk across the **Edmund Pettus Bridge**, one of the most recognized symbols of the Civil Rights Movement. *USA Weekend* includes the bridge, along with Ellis Island, Jamestown and the Lincoln Memorial, among the “ten historic landmarks that bear proud witness to our nation’s enduring freedoms.” The bridge was built in 1940 and named for a Confederate general and U.S. senator from Selma.

**U.S. 80 at Water Avenue.** Free.

*Voting Rights Trail Interpretive Center*







## National Voting Rights Museum

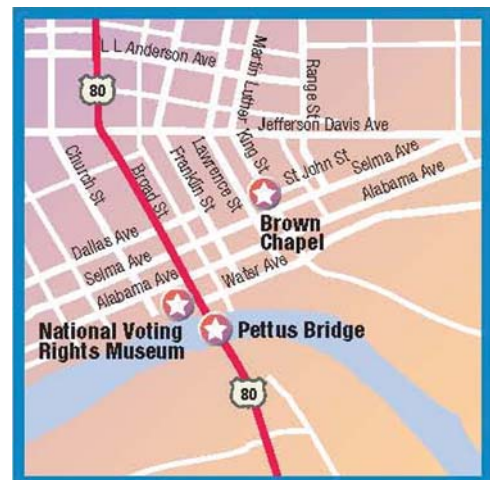
The modest museum showcases items and participants' stories related to the voting rights movement. Volunteer guides share their recollections of the struggle to gain the right to vote. Look for the window at the rear of the museum (*pictured at left*) that overlooks the river and the Pettus Bridge to see names of civil rights leaders who were active in Selma.

After President Lyndon Johnson signed the **1965 Voting Rights Act** on Aug. 6, some 7,000 Negroes registered to vote in Dallas County and defeated the segregationist sheriff who led the "Bloody Sunday" attack on marchers.

**1012 Water Avenue**, a half-block west of the Pettus Bridge. Open weekdays; weekends by appointment. Admission. 334-418-0800. [www.nvrmi.org](http://www.nvrmi.org)

## Additional Sites

**Old Depot Museum** is housed in a restored 1891 railway depot. It includes artifacts from the Civil War and voting rights eras, plus rare African-American photography of early 1900s life. 4 Martin Luther King Jr. Street. 334-574-2197.





# Tuskegee

*Tuskegee Airmen NHS*

Just east of Montgomery is Tuskegee, where **Dr. George Washington Carver's** agricultural experiments made **Tuskegee Institute** the best-known black college in America. The Carver Museum is maintained by the **National Park Service**, which also operates Moton Field, home to the legendary **Tuskegee Airmen**. They gained fame during World War II for their bravery and flying expertise. Because their flying skills equaled those of whites – defying racial stereotypes – the American military was desegregated in 1946.

## Tuskegee Institute National Historic Site

**Booker T. Washington**, the founder of Tuskegee Institute, was one of the most prominent black Americans of the early 20th Century. The university campus offers various highlights:



*Booker T. Washington Monument*

- **Carver Museum** features National Park Service exhibits that spotlight the legacy of black scientist George Washington Carver at Tuskegee Institute. His research on peanuts, sweet potatoes and other crops revolutionized Southern agriculture. Tuskegee University campus. 334-727-6390.

- **The Oaks** is the elegant 1899 home of Tuskegee Institute president Booker T. Washington, designed by black architect Robert Taylor and built by students. The National Park Service operates the house museum on the **Tuskegee University** campus. 334-727-6390.

## Tuskegee Airmen National Historic Site

The site revisits the heroics of the **Tuskegee Airmen**, who helped end segregation in the Armed Forces after World War II and set the stage for legal challenges to segregation. View exhibits and audio-visual programs and enjoy guided walks to explore this preamble to the Civil Rights Movement.

**Moton Field**, where the Tuskegee Airmen trained for flight, includes photos and artifacts depicting the era. One mile south of I-85 at Exit 38. 1616 Chappie James Avenue, 334-724-0922 or 2307 Dr. Lincoln Ragsdale Drive, 334-724-0602.

## Tuskegee Human & Civil Rights Multi-Cultural Center

The center showcases the Tuskegee Syphilis Study and student involvement in the Civil Rights Movement. 104 South Elm Street. 334-724-0800.



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